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# THE ORGAN

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## FIFTY YEARS HENCE

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By FRANCIS BURGESS



# THE ORGAN FIFTY YEARS HENCE

A STUDY  
OF ITS DEVELOPMENT IN THE LIGHT OF ITS PAST  
HISTORY AND PRESENT TENDENCIES.

BY  
FRANCIS BURGESS, F.S.A., Scot.

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# THE ORGAN OF FIFTY YEARS HENCE.\*

I PROPOSE to take as my "text" this evening the substance of a paper read on April 16 of this year before the Musical Association by our member, Dr. C. W. Pearce, whose enforced absence from this meeting I, for one, very deeply regret, for I am certain that, had he been with us, he would have been able to contribute knowledge of great critical and historical value to the discussions which, I trust, will follow upon the conclusion of my remarks. The full text of Dr. Pearce's lecture will be found in the recently published volume of the Musical Association's "Proceedings," a volume which should be found in the library of every musician who takes an intelligent interest in the history and progress of the art which he pursues. It would be impossible, within the short space of time during which I propose to claim your attention, for me to do more than direct your attention to the principal points of Dr. Pearce's paper, selecting

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\* A Lecture delivered before the London Section of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, on Saturday, November 9, 1907.

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only such portions of it as may enable us to realise at a glance the actual amount of progress which organists and organ builders are justly able to claim for their instrument as a result of the nineteenth century.

In the first place we are reminded by Dr. Pearce that the English organ of a hundred years ago was "a comparatively small instrument, but that it had a character which was all its own and that it was admirably adapted to fulfil the one great purpose of its existence—the accompaniment of the human voice." That it was indeed a small instrument is shown by the following comparisons. The largest organ existing in England at the time was that at Christ Church, Spitalfields (built by Richard Bridge), which contained 34 stops. Its contemporary at St. Michael's, Hamburg (built by Silbermann's foreman, Hildebrand) contained about twice that number of registers. At St. Paul's Cathedral, the Father Smith instrument, with Crang's additions, had only a total of 27 stops, while Muller's organ in the Cathedral at Haarlem had 60. The organ at Westminster Abbey (by Schreider and Jordan, with additions by Avery) contained 21 stops, while the instrument at the Dominicans' Church at Antwerp could boast of 54. These typical examples might be multiplied indefinitely but always with one result—that of showing that the English organ of a hundred years ago was a small instrument as compared with the organs existing in buildings of about equal importance on the Continent. English concert-room organs were at



this time still smaller, being invariably instruments of either one or two manuals.

But, as Dr. Pearce remarks, English organs "had a character which was all their own" and therefore, with all their limitations, they were faithful to the ideal which must govern artistic organ building throughout all time—the ideal which insists upon making an organ sound like itself and not like something else. Then, again, these old instruments fulfilled their primary function, which, in the majority of cases, is the accompaniment of the human voice, but in this connection I am inclined to go with Dr. Pearce only so far as to admit that in this capacity they sufficed for the needs of their day. Personally, I cannot help feeling that their small scales and low wind pressures would have rendered them inadequate to the requirements of "symphonic accompaniments" such as are demanded by the modern writers of Church music and that the changed conditions of worship involving, as they do, the necessity of accompanying huge congregations in the singing of hymns, would render these old instruments ineffective for that purpose unless their ample mutation was employed without intermission—a thing which, I believe, would be intolerable to modern ears.

This brings us to our next point, the composition of the organ of a hundred years ago. We will take the largest English organ already referred to—that at Christ Church, Spitalfields. Excluding the Bassoon, Hautboy,

VOX HUMANA, Cremona and Great Cornet, which may be reckoned as Solo stops not designed to form part of the ensemble of the instrument, we find that the specification consisted of eleven stops of 8ft. pitch (including 4 reeds), nine stops of 4ft. pitch (including 2 reeds), a Twelfth, a Fifteenth, a Tierce (or 17th), a Larigot (or 19th), a Sesquialtera of 5 ranks, a Furniture of 3 ranks, a Swell Cornet of 3 ranks and a Choir Mixture of 3 ranks—that is to say, upon a foundation of eleven unison stops was reared the enormous superstructure of 9 octave registers and no less than 19 ranks of mutation work, without a single manual double or any kind of pedal organ beyond a C Drum-pedal. I can only wish that some of our good friends who talk so enthusiastically about the beautiful organs which were built in the good old times could have an instrument like this to play upon. In face of such an instance it is, surely, not very wise of anyone to describe the modern organ as a “music mill” or to accuse modern organ builders of methods of barbarism. And it must be remembered that the amount of foundation tone produced in those days by a given number of unison stops was nothing like that which we are accustomed to now. The Diapasons were not altogether unlike some modern Dulcianas, while the Flutes were all alike and must have been entirely swamped in the full organ by the Reeds. I should, of course, be very sorry to use the epithet “sausage-frying” to the tone produced by the reeds of a hundred years ago. Whatever our views may be on the

all-important question of diet, we have no right to libel English pork-butchers and cooks to this extent. It is true that Mr. Leffler in 1799 thought the reeds at St. Sepulchre's, Holborn, "very good" in his day, but as Dr. Southgate has very aptly remarked, the question of tone is one of education, and people were then accustomed to these coarse reeds. An age which could tolerate the big old-fashioned coarse oboes in the orchestra could hardly have criticised organ tone from our standpoint.

Still, I would not have you think that I have dealt with these old instruments only to pour scorn upon them. I only mention this side of the case because I feel that some amount of discrimination is necessary in our admiration of things which are old. We ought to preserve a certain critical balance of thought in estimating the value of the productions of past ages. It is equally unsafe either to condemn or to praise unreservedly any particular kind of thing because it happens to have been brought into existence a long time ago. And I expect there were good organs and bad organs 100 years ago just as there are to-day. In fact, Mr. Abdy Williams gives a number of specific instances of post-Restoration organs which were erected in London by incompetent persons and which were so bad that they were speedily taken down again. I willingly admit that such old instruments as have survived restoration may undoubtedly be described as mellow. Speaking of those which I have actually seen and played upon, I should say that part of this mellow-

ness is due to dust in the pipes, a considerable number of which I have usually found to be off their speech altogether. We must not ignore the important part which dirt plays in lending a charm to ancient things. There are, for instance, some windows in Westminster Abbey which are regarded as standing examples of the immense superiority of the old artists over the new. Up to a point I cannot help agreeing that this is true, but if a vacuum cleaner could be applied to those fifteenth century windows in the apse at Westminster, I imagine that an appreciable amount of their characteristic charm would disappear. There is, after all, such a thing as progress, and though all times are considered good as soon as they are old we may make a mistake if we consider them perfect.

For a further number of most interesting points regarding the organs which were being used in England a century ago, I must refer you directly to Dr. Pearce. Unequal temperament, already discredited on the Continent, still prevailed in this country, as indeed it did during the greater part of the nineteenth century. A single octave of pull down pedal keys to GG seems to have been the normal thing, but as the Great Organ compass extended as far as that (except that GG $\sharp$ , AA $\sharp$ , BB $\flat$  and CC $\sharp$ , not often required, were omitted) the principal stops of the organ were all provided with true basses. There was no rigid uniformity, however, in the downward extent of the compass of the Great Organ, and in exceptional cases it went down to CCC, as at St. Michael's



Mount, in Cornwall, where it remains to this day. Manual couplers seem to have been the exception rather than the rule, or, if they were used, it was by means of the old-fashioned "Tumbler action," which was so clumsy a contrivance that if the coupler were drawn while the notes were depressed, the fingers were apt to be thrown off the keys and the whole mechanism even to become disarranged. The Swell Organ, with its short compass, occupied a place of little importance in the instrument. It was practically the old Echo Organ still, but with moveable shutters instead of fixed ones. The blowing arrangements were primitive in their simplicity and the organ blower still occupied a position of honour and profit only next in dignity and independence to that of the parish clerk. The touch of these old organs was comparatively light while only a few of the softer stops were drawn but as soon as the wind was admitted to a greater number of large scale pipes the pressure on the pallets became enormous and the touch was proportionately heavier. This, I believe, was the real reason for the inclusion of such an excessive quantity of mutation work in the organs of the period. You will know that when a 4ft. stop is added to a unison it is not with the idea of producing the octave but of brightening and corroborating the foundation tone. The same principle applies to all the higher mutation work, and as the wind supply was scanty and the action unplayable with any great number of unison stops in use, the small scaled but shrill mutation work was piled on,

theoretically to reinforce the foundation tone, but practically, I should think, to accustom people's ears to an intolerable din. It is not to be wondered at that, early in the nineteenth century, some organists began to stop up or to disconnect some of their mutation ranks.

We now turn to the next period in organ building—the period which witnessed the emancipation of the instrument. I have used the word “emancipation” because it is a popular word nowadays and because the study of history teaches us that the emancipation of a nation or an individual or a class of society first of all implies that those to be emancipated are not only in a bad way to begin with, but that possibly they have to go through worse states than their first in order eventually to arrive at something better. A complete survey of the emancipatory process in regard to the organ would, therefore, involve a recital of the deeds of those exceedingly useful builders who have had sufficient originality to make serious mistakes and whose mistakes we are now profiting by. But I should be doing this Society an ill service were I to invite the members of its London section to discuss officially any matters which might even remotely be regarded as reflecting adversely upon some particular organ builder, either of the past or of the present. If, in the course of the next few moments, I should have occasion to draw attention to methods which must be regarded as artistically inadmissible, I hope it will be distinctly understood that I do so without special reference to any

firm or firms which at some period or other may have been guilty of them. Indeed, it would be well nigh impossible to maintain with any show of justice that any particular builder has, at every moment of his firm's existence, been uniformly right in all his methods or uniformly wrong.

To deal more especially with the constructive side of the organ's emancipation we must first look round to see exactly where and at what period the foundations of the modern organ in England were laid. And I think it is very generally allowed that organ building in its present sense began at York Minster in 1829. By reason of those great pioneer musical festivals which were held at York a number of foreign musicians visited the place and it was from them that Dr. John Camidge learned something of the splendours of the Continental instruments with their adequate pedal departments and their magnificent schemes of unisonal and sub-unisonal foundation tone. After the fire which destroyed the sadly inadequate instrument at which Dr. Camidge had hitherto presided, an opportunity occurred for the building of an organ which should introduce into England the best of the German traditions and which might serve as a model upon which English builders might reconstruct the principles of their own art. In Mr. William Hill the right man was found, for his ideas were thoroughly progressive, while, at the same time, he was steeped in the best English methods which existed. His Diapasons, which may be regarded



as a development of and an improvement upon, the old Snetzler tone, were full and ringing, though perhaps they were inclined a little towards stringiness. His organ at York, and that at Birmingham Town Hall which came soon after, may be regarded as the first serious attempts to provide a body of foundation tone which could really be considered adequate, while at the same time breaking away from the tyranny of the overgrown mutation ranks. Some authorities have urged, possibly with truth, that Dr. Camidge's insistence on the removal of most of the upper work of the York organ was ill-advised and that it rendered the ensemble dull and lacking in brilliancy. This may have been the case, but if so, it was an error of judgment which may easily be pardoned in view of the type of thing which was all-prevailing at the time. As a result of this discovery of true foundation tone in England a number of builders tried to improve upon the idea by introducing Horn Diapasons, Harmonic Diapasons and other monstrosities on their Great Organs.

The next phase of development is connected with the great name of Schulze, whose magnificent work at Doncaster, Leeds and Tyne Dock remains to this day as a standing monument to his genius. Schulze Diapasons were made with a very wide, low mouth, having a large bore admitting a copious supply of wind at a moderate pressure. The tone is very powerful and weighty—the earliest approach, in fact, to really “big” foundation tone—but there is often a disproportionate falling off in

the treble portion of the stop. Mr. Wedgwood, who has personally visited practically every Schulze Diapason in England, considers that there is a tendency towards coarseness in his work, a tendency which has been more than accentuated by some of those builders who have attempted to imitate him. At the same time the appearance of Schulze midway through the nineteenth century had a most beneficial influence on organ tone, and Mr. T. C. Lewis, who has based his work on the Schulze model, may be said to have reached the zenith of achievement in this particular style of foundation tone.

The third, and probably the greatest of those giants who followed one another in the task of rehabilitating the English organ, was Henry Willis. Even if I should appear to speak with undue enthusiasm about his work, I feel, nevertheless, that no words I am able to command can express with any degree of adequacy all that English organists owe to him. In this epoch we are again indebted to foreign influences, but this time to those of France. At Prince Consort's Exhibition of 1851 English builders had an opportunity of studying representative French and German organs at first hand. Henry Willis was profoundly impressed with the many valuable features contained in the organs of the French builders, and it is, indeed, to this fifty years old *entente cordiale* that we owe the introduction of string voicing, the use of harmonic pipes and tubes in flue and reed stops, and it was the French system of reed-voicing

upon the basis of which Willis reared and developed his own unrivalled work. It is owing to the great influence that Willis exercised over English organ building that we owe the very general use of tubular-pneumatic action, the introduction of thumb pistons in organs of fair size, the placing of the chorus and orchestral brass reeds upon separate soundboards with a heavier wind pressure, and, above all, the crowning glory of the modern organ over the old in the direction of substituting varied and contrasted tone colours in individual stops for the respectable drab tints which formerly were spread over the entire instrument, while at the same time securing an ensemble which is at once sonorous and brilliant. Now I am not going to admit that Henry Willis said the last word in organ building, for the last word can never be said, nor am I going to suggest that he invented all the things he popularised. I should indeed be bold if I asserted that he or anyone invented anything, for a careful study of the correspondence columns of our musical papers has persuaded me that everything which anybody ever invented was always really invented by somebody else. It is a most astonishing thing that in an intelligent age like this it should really be necessary to have to justify the influences of Henry Willis. A good friend of mine wrote to the papers the other day enquiring pathetically if the use of the tracker action was a lost art. An art which never was an art, but only an expedient, can never be lost. If it expires we need only sing the *Te Deum*. I am well

aware that in an instrument of one or possibly two manuals for a country church which possesses no means for providing mechanical blowing, the use of tracker action would be wise, and I would always recommend it. But play upon a small three-manual instrument with a few couplers drawn and you will speedily agree that this preference for old-fashioned things may easily become an affectation. Then, again, the use of thumb pistons is sometimes discredited on the score that organists ought to register with their brains and not with their thumbs. Now if a man's brains projected from his head to a distance of three or four feet at an angle of 45 degrees, this would be excellent advice, but so long as they remain inside, wrapped up in an amazingly small space, such remarks are futile. Any player of experience knows quite well that much modern organ music and some modern organ accompaniments demand the building up of rapid *crescendos* which cannot be obtained merely by opening the swell box but which must be secured by several combination pistons used in rapid succession, each one of which adds to the registration while both hands are on the keyboard and both feet are engaged in negotiating a rapid pedal passage. Finally, Willis' plan of placing his chorus reeds on a heavier pressure of wind is constantly being called into question, though not by practical men. This is primarily a question for voicers, and I challenge any one of Willis' newspaper critics to produce with their own hands a reed on, say  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches of wind,



which will fail to drive anybody younger than the historic Mr. Leffler (who was listening to organs in 1799) out of the building. I am not asserting that a chorus reed cannot be voiced on a low pressure, such as  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches, for Willis himself did it and it is now being done every day—but not by the people who write to the papers condemning high pressures. In fact, those who are actually engaged in the voicing of reeds know the difficulties of making a light winded stop come up to our modern standard too well to regard low pressure as anything but an expedient which must be allowed in certain cases and in small organs, but which is not an admirable or even a desirable system.

So far we have dealt only with the constructive side of organ development and you may have inferred from what has been said that everything has been going on in the best possible manner. There is another side to the picture, however, which we cannot ignore, however much we would like to. It must be confessed that when the nineteenth century builders shortened the manual compass of their instruments to CC they failed to provide anything like an adequate number of pedal basses to take the place of the notes that were lost. I have already pointed out that the clumsy old long manual organs provided more or less suitable basses for all their important stops. In many cases these basses were lopped off and thrown away while a solitary pedal Bordun was provided to do duty for every possible combination from *pp* to *ff*. If the organ

was one of any pretensions, an enormous open flute, mis-called Open Diapason, was provided for use with all the louder stops, whatever their quality. We may except Schulze from blame in this matter in view of his pedal organ of 1862 at Doncaster, which contained no less than 25 independent stops as against 61 on the manuals. But Willis, in his organ at St. Paul's, completed twelve years later than the Doncaster instrument, provided only 9 pedal stops to 43 on the manuals. Nor is this by any means an extreme case. If you work through the English organ specifications of sufficient importance to be included in Hopkins and Rimbault, you will find pedal organs of only 3, 4, 5 or 6 stops in instruments of quite fair size. For this reason I should like to associate myself in the main with the crusade on the subject of the pedal organ which has been preached for some years past in this country by my friend, Mr. Thomas Casson. It is not very long since he placed his views personally before the members of the London section of this Society, and, whatever you may have thought of his schemes of octave duplication and so forth, you cannot have failed to admit that, on the subject of the pedal organ, he has stated a case which in its main contentions is well nigh unanswerable. If organists usually sat so that the manual pipes did not come between them and the booming notes of the pedal organ, they would hear for themselves the lack of proportion which exists.

Turning now to the mechanical and tonal developments

of the past twenty-five years, we immediately find ourselves deafened by the din of inventors, all clamouring for recognition like so many engine drivers. And now that "recognition" is so much in the air, is it not time that some responsible body of organists formed a conciliation board, so that the musical journals might be able to devote more of their space to music and less to the argumentative wranglings of correspondents whose contributions are not very interesting to anybody but themselves. One of the most useful (and, I think, fruitful) movements of recent years was that inaugurated by Mr. Casson, to which I have already referred. Basing his theories on the German practice, he has persuaded most of us that a large variety of pedal stops is absolutely essential. There are only two obstacles in the way of carrying out his ideas—the twin questions of space and cost. You know the sort of idea that many church architects have about the accommodation of an organ. Any odd corner will do for it so long as the space is not required for a coal cellar or for hanging up surplices. The organ builder is seldom consulted until it is too late, so he has to cram as much pipe work as possible into the smallest possible space. Then you know the attitude of many people on the question of price. However much they may differ on matters of religious belief, they all agree in holding the fundamental truth that cheapness must be secured at any cost. Unlike many prophets who denounce existing practices, Mr. Casson has put us in





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## PEDAL ORGAN, 14 Stops, 4 Couplers.

		FEET
1. Double Open Wood (20 from No. 3) ..	Wood, 32	16
2. Double-Stopped Diapason (from No. 24) ..	.. 32	8
3. Open Wood .. ..	.. 16	4
4. Open Diapason .. ..	Metal, 16	8
5. Stopped Diapason (from No. 24) ..	Wood, 16	8
6. Sub Bass .. ..	.. 16	4
7. Violone (from No. 50) .. ..	Metal, 16	8
8. Salicetonal (from No. 15) .. ..	.. 16	4
9. Octave Wood (20 from No. 3) ..	Wood, 8	4
10. Violoncello (from No. 50) .. ..	Metal, 8	4
11. Flute (20 from No. 6) .. ..	Wood, 8	4
12. Bombardon (20 from No. 13) ..	Metal, 32	16
13. Ophicleide .. ..	.. 16	8
14. Posanne (20 from No. 13) .. ..	.. 8	4

I. *Choir to Pedal.*

II. *Great to Pedal.*

III. *Swell to Pedal.*

IV. *Solo to Pedal.*

## CHOIR ORGAN, 9 Stops, 2 Couplers.

		FEET
15. Double Salicetonal .. ..	Metal, 16	8
16. Open Diapason .. ..	Wood, 8	4
17. Gedeckt .. ..	.. 8	4
18. Salicetonal .. ..	Metal, 8	4
19. Dulciana .. ..	.. 8	4
20. Flauto Traverso .. ..	.. 4	2
21. Subject .. ..	.. 4	2
22. Dulcet .. ..	.. 2	1
23. Dulciana Mixture, 12, 19, 22 ..	.. 2	1

V. *Swell to Choir.*

VI. *Solo to Choir.*

## GREAT ORGAN, 19 Stops, 4 Couplers.

		FEET
24. Sub Bordun .. ..	Wood, 32	16
25. Contra Clarabella (19 from No. 6) ..	Wood, 16	8
26. Gross Geigen .. ..	Metal, 16	8
27. Open Diapason I. .. ..	Metal, 8	4
28. Open Diapason II. (20 from No. 4) ..	.. 8	4
29. Open Diapason III. .. ..	.. 8	4
30. Geigen .. ..	.. 8	4
31. Hohl Flute .. ..	Wood, 8	4
32. Quint .. ..	.. 54	2
33. Octave .. ..	Metal, 4	2
34. Geigen Principal .. ..	.. 4	2
35. Wald Flute .. ..	Wood, 4	2
36. Octave Quint .. ..	Metal, 24	12
37. Super Octave .. ..	.. 2	1
38. Harmonics, 10, 17, 19, 21, 22 ..	.. 2	1
39. Mixture, 15, 10, 22, 26, 29 .. ..	.. 2	1

		FEET
40. Trombone .. ..	.. 16	8
41. Tromba .. ..	.. 8	4
42. Octave Tromba .. ..	.. 4	2

## III. *Reeds on Solo.*

IV. *Choir to Great.*

V. *Swell to Great.*

VI. *Solo to Great.*

## SWELL ORGAN, 16 Stops, Tremulant and 1 Coupler.

		FEET
43. Lieblich Bordun .. ..	Wood, 16	8
44. Lieblich Gedeckt .. ..	Metal & Wood, 8	4
45. Open Diapason .. ..	Metal, 8	4
46. Echo Gamba .. ..	.. 8	4
47. Vox Angelica (ten, C) .. ..	.. 8	4
48. Principal .. ..	.. 4	2
49. Lieblich Flute .. ..	Wood, 4	2
50. Fifteenth .. ..	Metal, 2	1
51. Sengulitea, 12, (17*), 19, 22, 26, 29 ..	.. 8	4
52. Oboe .. ..	.. 8	4
53. Vox Humana .. ..	.. 8	4

## XI. *Tremulant*

		FEET
54. Double Trumpet .. ..	.. 16	8
55. Trumpet .. ..	.. 8	4
56. Horn .. ..	.. 8	4
57. Horn Quint .. ..	.. 54	2
58. Clarion .. ..	.. 4	2

## XII. *Octave.*

\* Introduced at first break

## SOLO ORGAN, 11 Stops, Tremulant, and 1 Coupler.

		FEET
59. Contra Vinda .. ..	Metal, 16	8
60. Viste D'Orochestre .. ..	.. 8	4
61. Viste Céleste .. ..	.. 8	4
62. Viste Octavante .. ..	.. 4	2
63. Cornet de Violes, 10, 12, 15 ..	.. 8	4
64. Harmonic Flute .. ..	.. 8	4
65. Concert Flute .. ..	.. 4	2
66. Harmonic Piccolo .. ..	.. 2	1
67. Clarinet .. ..	.. 16	8
68. Orchestral Hautboy .. ..	.. 8	4

## XIII. *Tremulant* (59 to 68 in a small-box)

		FEET
69. Tuba .. ..	.. 8	4

## XIV. *Octave.*

XV. *Sub Octave.*

XVI. *Unison Off.*

XVII. *Swell to Solo.*

the way of overcoming these difficulties by the use of unisonal duplication and by what is called the "continuation system" now adopted by many of the leading builders. By this means some of the manual doubles, which are of course in themselves comparatively quiet stops, though used in *mf* or *f* combinations, can be drawn independently on the pedal organ for use with the soft manual combinations. When they are in evidence on the manuals it is only in such combinations as are sufficiently loud to require a heavier and independent pedal stop, so nothing is lost. Then again by means of continuations or extensions the lower pipes of manual 8ft. stops are utilised to form the upper part of a pedal 16ft. register. Of course the inevitable critic objects to this. He would much rather have an independent pedal organ of, say 3 stops, than a pedal department of 12 registers, 9 of which are secured by transmission or extension. Now such devices as these are on an entirely different footing to such cheap-jack dodges as the systematic grooving of the lowest octaves of manual Gambas or Dulcianas to stops of an entirely different quality and construction, like the Gedeckt—a device which people accept with cheerfulness. If there be any critics here who believe it to be more artistic to use two pipes when one will serve, I would ask them to study the scheme for the reconstruction of Ely Cathedral organ which recently appeared in "Musical News" and then to go down to Ely when the work is finished and give the system a reasonable test. When they come

to play upon it I doubt if they will be conscious of the fact that some of the pedal stops are duplicated or extended from the manuals, and I think they will find that it is quite possible to obtain a well varied and entirely adequate pedal organ even where both space and money alike are circumscribed.

I need hardly remind you that this system of pedal extension and transmission formed one of the features of that exceedingly fine series of organs built in this country by Mr. Hope-Jones. It is not a popular thing, I know, to say a good word for Hope-Jones organs nowadays, because the great majority of people who have never seen them condemn them unreservedly. But it is undeniable that for a time he caught the ear of this country and that, in the main, his influence was a good one. It is an undisputed fact that, in order to gain the attention of the British public, it is absolutely necessary to have a good case and then to exaggerate it. And if you take the various tone colours which Mr. Hope-Jones popularised (I dare not say invented) you will find a trace of judicious exaggeration in them all. In this matter I know I part company with some of my best friends, but one cannot do more than regret one's limitations. The Diapason Phonon showed us what a magnificent flood of foundation tone could be obtained from a single stop, and it formed an excellent foil to the slotted Diapasons of Willis, which were sadly lacking in foundation tone. So, too, the Tibia Plena and Tibia Clausa emphasised the

value of powerful foundational flute tones in the building up of a fine ensemble (a thing which could never be done with the old-fashioned Stopped Diapason) while the leathered lip provided the means for getting entirely new tone colours from pipes of conventional structure. But running through the whole thing one seems conscious of a tinge of exaggeration. Everything is just a little too intense, and I do not believe that there is any future for Hope-Jones organs in England except in a modified form. I am not taking into account the prejudices of those who object to the use of such words as *Tibia*. I can bear with anyone not liking the tone, for it is that which matters. But terms are immaterial, and a *Tibia* by any other name would sound as sweet—or otherwise.

Before taking leave of Mr. Hope-Jones to-night we must not forget to give him credit for including those exceedingly beautiful string toned Viols (first voiced by Mr. J. W. Whiteley) into his organs. Small scaled stops of this type are now coming into general use in all organs of even moderate size built on really modern lines.

In this section of our subject we have been more or less constructive so far. It remains for us to notice one or two attempts which have been made to throw the English organ somewhat out of its normal and traditional course. I have said a good deal already about the beneficial influence of Mr. Casson on the modern organ. It has given me the more pleasure to do so because I believe his genius

to be greatly underrated and his aims sadly misunderstood by the majority of English organists, whose many-sided activities prevent much close application to the technique of organ building. But I am bound to say that his system of building large organs, however excellent in its constituent parts, is, in the aggregate, too revolutionary to meet with general acceptance in England. I know the names of Hopkins and Best will be hurled at me with tremendous force, but it is impossible for us to forget, as practical men, that Dr. Hopkins and Mr. Best both presided at, and took a pride in presiding at, organs of a conventional type. On account of the variety of scales and registers required on the pedal organ it is a simple matter to extend various manual stops downwards, but the comparatively small number of 4ft. stops required in the modern organ and the peculiar care which has to be taken in their scaling and voicing in order to make them suitable for their especially delicate function (which is to form a connecting link between the foundation tone and the mutation work) renders any systematic attempt to carry eight feet stops upward to form four feet registers an extremely dangerous proceeding, and one which may very easily throw the tonal balance out of gear. I cannot believe that a stop of sufficient scale to be called an 8ft. Clarabella on the Great can be of small enough scale to act as a Claribel Flute (4ft.) on the Choir.

Then we come to a feature of the Hope-Jones system which has never succeeded in establishing itself in Eng-



land—I mean the use of electro-pneumatic action as a normal thing and not merely as an expedient for overcoming difficulties of an abnormal type.

Mr. Lemare has recently stigmatised the idea of a detached console as insane, a view which many will regard as somewhat extreme though quite understandable as the effect of a reaction upon American experiences. There is one thing a trifle more insane, however, and that is the idea of a console on casters so that it can be wheeled about the church from place to place. Nor is there any particular advantage in having the tonal section of the organ cut into slices and distributed about the building in odd positions. A Bach fugue has no added charm when the subject is heard in the south west corner and the counter subject in the north east. Hymn tunes are none the better for having their basses played on the pedal in a transept, their upper parts in the chancel with the tenor soloed on a stop up in the tower. All these things are ephemeralities of the Hope-Jones' system which never found general acceptance in this country and probably never will. Electric action has, indeed, become quite unpopular in England and many people fight shy of it altogether, remembering its few failures while its many successes are forgotten. As an expedient for overcoming the difficulties attendant upon the speech of organs which have to be divided on either side of a broad chancel or between transept and choir, electric action is invaluable and there are examples in ex-



istence to show that where experiments are avoided and sound methods used this type of action may be as reliable as tubular-pneumatic and tracker actions.

In the remarks which have been placed before you an effort has been made to show that present day organ building at its best is the result of a number of contrary influences—some tending in one direction and some in another. The total result is that inevitable refuge of an Englishman—a compromise. And on the whole I think this is good. We have been influenced by both German and French ideals, but the English organ of to-day is in many ways superior to that of either nation, both tonal and mechanically—saving only in the matter of the pedal department, which is still inferior to that of Germany. The average German organ is solid and massive enough in its total effect but sadly lacking in variety of tone colours. The French organ, on the other hand, is brilliant but it possesses no body at all. I well remember comparing the tone of the grand organ at St. Jacques at Dieppe with that of a mechanical instrument which was grinding out tunes in the market place near by. The church organ was like a display of fireworks while that in the fair was quite broad and dignified by comparison and its reeds were curiously smooth and lacking in harshness.

Looking back on the achievements of the nineteenth century, comparing the organs of its beginning with those of its end, and observing the gradual and cautious progress which is so very characteristic of us as a nation, it

is not very difficult to see the lines upon which the instrument of the future will be planned. There will be no sudden or great revolution and the organ in fifty years' time will be an organ still and not an orchestrion.

With regard to the Great department (a department by which any organ must stand or fall) the lines of the classical German models will be followed. There will be ample provision for 16ft. stops on the manuals and on large instruments the Great will include a 32ft. register, thus developing the acoustic undertones as well as the overtones. The prejudice against mutation work (caused by the excesses of the good old times) which culminated in the Hope-Jones plan of abolishing mixtures altogether, has already begun to disappear, for the newest examples of tonal design are well provided with mutation ranks—not piled on indiscriminately, as in the old days, but based on adequate foundation tone and scaled and voiced scientifically rather than by rule of thumb methods. In all instruments of fair size the chorus reeds will be placed on separate soundboards with increased wind pressures. The fiery stops of this class with plenty of “clang” will be found in the swell department, while the chorus reeds of the Great department will be of the broad, smooth type as developed since Willis. There will, therefore, be no more of that senseless duplication of one particular kind of reed tone all through the organ, such as is found in organs sometimes regarded as of

peculiar economy, and, in three-manual instruments, the great reeds will be playable from the choir keyboard so as to be available for solo use along with the Great flue-work, a device easy of accomplishment when they are on a separate soundboard, though practically useless if they are of the old snarling type of tone. Octave and sub-octave couplers will be provided for solo or peculiar ensemble effects only, but they will form no part of the complete tonal scheme. English ideas *versus* those of America will probably find a ground for contest over the question of swell boxes, a contest which has, in fact, already begun. One English builder whom I greatly respect but do not agree with, has already expressed to me his conviction that the entire organ should be enclosed in boxes throughout. I don't believe English conservatism will ever agree to that, whatever else it may accept. In the case of 4-manual instruments the Swell and probably most of the Solo organ will be enclosed, and the latter department will contain an entire family of small-scaled, string-toned stops, complete from double to harmonics. In such an organ the Choir department will be a small-scaled, unenclosed, light-winded replica of the 100 year old Great but without the dirt and with the necessary addition of a light double. In the more usual 3-manual instruments (and I think they will still be more usual) there will probably be a compromise as to the enclosing of the Choir department. For my own part, I feel a leaning towards two departments out of three being enclosed, and in this many

organists will agree with me, though some will not. But the Great Organ will certainly remain unenclosed (unexpressive, if you will, should your only idea of expression be the opening and shutting of swell shutters), but broad, massive and dignified as becomes the main department of an instrument which claims the proud title of "King of Instruments."

So much then for the all-important question of tone and the way in which it will be secured. Now for the less important question of "control." We are sometimes led to believe that mechanical registration is opposed to eclectic registration—that a man who gets his stops out by means of pistons or key touches is a less intelligent player than one who pulls them out with his hands. If this be so, we must place the English cathedral organists amongst the unintelligent section of the community, with the solitary exception, perhaps, of Mr. Nicholson of Carlisle, who is just now playing on a Positive which has no pistons. But those of you who are practical players will know that there are a number of obvious and ordinary stop combinations which can quite properly be secured by fixed pistons, without any seriously bad effects on the quality of the playing. And in the organ of the future I believe that fixed pistons will be the rule, supplemented by a certain number of adjustable combination movements of a type which can easily be set at the keyboard and which can be altered with little trouble in the intervals between the pieces of a recital or the musical portions of a



service. There was a time when I should have thought it safer to prophesy that all pistons in the future would be adjustable. But experience is beginning to show that in those organs which have combination movements of this type, the tendency is to set them to bring on certain oft-required sets of stops and then to leave them alone, so that they become fixed combinations. Those unhappy men who play on organs where the combinations are nullified every time the wind goes out, so that they have to reset everything whenever they want to play, are greatly to be pitied. In a strenuous age like the present, when an organist gives music lessons all the week, takes choir practices at every available time, plays the piano at mother's meetings and fills up the intervals of his day of rest by teaching in the Sunday school, counting the collections and filling in the marriage registers, adjustable pistons which require to be set before each service are a burden too great to be borne.

With the increased recognition which will come of the functions of the pedal organ, the necessity will arise of giving more attention to the control of the pedal draw stops. It isn't of very much use to have a large variety of pedal stops unless you can control them with ease and certainty, and for this reason I think the "pedal help" device which gives automatically an appropriate bass to the manual combinations will be used. Another device which has been found exceedingly effective in practice is that which makes the pistons of each department provide

a suitable pedal bass. This can be made to act on the couplers, too, if they are grouped with the draw-stops of the department which they augment, a feature adopted by Willis at St. Paul's and Lincoln, and since used in a number of other large organs. But in summing up these remarks on the mechanical accessories of the organ of the future, I would say that my conclusions are drawn only from what I see is beginning to happen already, and it is in this section of the subject that we may possibly see developments that may not be quite on the lines I suggest. But control is as nothing compared with tone, for what profit is it that you have devices to give you all kinds of wonderful combinations when each combination you get on only makes you want to get it off again.

Time forbids anything like an adequate reference to the various influences which are going on in America, nearly all of which are far from satisfactory. The latest thing is to be seen in the "unit" system of organ building, by which you will be able to draw any stop on any of the manuals. With all the advantages that this system may be said to have, it is undeniable that the old-fashioned contrast between one section of the organ and another obtained by various complete tonal schemes, varied in scaling and winding, will be almost entirely lost sight of. Nevertheless the idea has distinct possibilities in it to this extent:—In a small instrument a third manual upon which any stop from either of the other

two manuals could be used in its solo capacity might be of great advantage. But beyond this any attempt to break down the distinctions which exist between the various departments should be met with uncompromising opposition. Fortunately, we are so old-fashioned in this country that we shall decline to have anything to do with the unit system until it has been discredited, and then we shall not want to try it.

Let me, in conclusion, utter a word of warning to those of you who are inclined to distrust such healthy and sane progress as has been made in English organ building because you think that modern organs do not possess true "church tone." What is this tone that it should be considered so entirely ecclesiastical? Often it is coarse and unvocal in its ensemble effects and merely dull in its softer combinations. Between the design for a concert organ and a design for a church organ there will be certain and serious differences. But to use the term "church tone" to distinguish something, which in the abstract, proves less inspiring than some other kind of tone, is as unfortunate a use of terms as is that most unfortunate expression "ecclesiastical art." Provided that the design of an organ is in accordance with the traditions of church organs at their best, the better the tone is from the modern standpoint and the more artistic the voicing the more fit it is to be called "church tone." Let us not be put off the scent by mere expressions. There is nothing intrinsically mean about



religious worship that should make us regard second-rate things as being peculiarly churchy. That is the case now and that will be the case in fifty years time. There is no instrument which is so capable of becoming degraded in its construction and in its use as the organ. And there is no instrument more capable of producing effects of an inspiring nature or of spurring men on to high ideals and lofty thoughts. It must be the aim of all those who have to do with the instrument, whether as builders or as players, to oppose all such developments as may tend to degrade the organ into a servile and ineffective imitation of the orchestra. On the other hand, we must be willing to weigh every legitimate advance on its merits, preserving an open mind and allowing ourselves as few preconceived notions as possible. The function of the prophetic office is to study the history of the past and to apply its teachings to the future. That is what I have endeavoured to do to-night. There are those among you who have given long and serious study to many of the points upon which I have touched. If what I have said may induce any such to give us the benefit of their experience, my remarks will not have been made in vain.

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In the course of the discussion which followed upon the reading of the above paper, Dr. J. W. Hinton said that in the main he agreed with the contentions which had been put forward by Mr. Burgess. In one important

matter, however, he felt bound to differ, for he thought that the organ of the future, while retaining tubular-pneumatic action for the drawstops and pistons, would have electro-pneumatic key action. In his opinion tubular-pneumatic key action imposed a barrier between the finger and the pipe, and for this reason he thought that eventually it would be superseded in the manner he had suggested.

THE END.

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